



Ballistic Missile Defense System Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

INTRODUCTION

The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) is preparing a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to evaluate the impacts of developing, testing, deploying, and planning for decommissioning activities for a Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). The BMDS will defend the U.S. homeland, deployed forces, and our friends and allies against all classes and ranges of threat ballistic missiles. The BMDS is a system of layered defenses using complementary sensors and weapons to engage threat ballistic missiles in all phases of flight. MDA has been developing and testing new technologies and is now preparing a PEIS to reflect MDA's current mission and the BMDS. The BMDS PEIS will provide the framework to plan and evaluate the range of complex activities comprising the BMDS, from test and development through deployment and decommissioning. MDA is preparing the PEIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council on Environmental Quality implementing regulations.

WHAT IS THE BMDS?

The BMDS is envisioned to be a layered system of elements, programs, and components each with specific defensive capabilities, when working together are able to defend against all classes and ranges of threat ballistic missiles in the boost, midcourse and terminal flight phases. The BMDS will integrate sensors, Command and Control, Battle Management, and Communications (C2BMC), and interceptors to detect, track and engage (or intercept) threat ballistic missiles. Interceptors use "hit-to-kill" technology that can destroy incoming missiles using force of impact. Hit-to-kill does not use explosives or nuclear materials. BMDS testing also includes consideration of targets and countermeasures and development of advanced technologies.

The MDA has evolved from focusing on test and development of individual element, programs and components to focusing on integrating them into one system. The objective of this new approach is to acquire a single, integrated system with the capability over time to deploy optimum combinations of sensors and weapons, all linking seamlessly through a BMDS-wide system for command and control, battle management and communications.

WHY MDA IS PREPARING THE BMDS PEIS

The MDA is the successor agency to the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization that prepared a PEIS in 1994. That PEIS, however, did not fully address air- or sea-based systems or new applications of directed energy technology as the concepts have evolved. The development and application of new technologies, as well as the need to evaluate all BMDS activities, requires the preparation of a new PEIS to address the MDA's current mission.

The BMDS PEIS will evaluate the full range of complex elements, programs, and components that comprise the BMDS and provide the framework for future environmental analyses as current activities evolve and mature. Also, the new PEIS will support the proposed integrated test schedule and consider future deployment and decommissioning activities.

NEPA requires Federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions. The environmental review process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on an understanding of those environmental consequences and take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. NEPA assessment can also provide analysis and information required to comply with other Federal requirements.

A programmatic EIS is useful for analyzing actions that are broad in scope, that occur in phases over several years and may be widely dispersed geographically. The programmatic or system-wide approach to considering environmental impacts creates an overarching framework that can then support the subsequent analysis of specific actions at specific locations within the overall system, i.e. tiering, with fewer resources.

The BMDS PEIS will simplify the process of evaluating actions that are similar in nature or broad in scope. The BMDS PEIS will consider the BMDS in its entirety and provide a framework for future, site-specific NEPA analyses, as required. The BMDS PEIS will provide general analyses of its programs, elements and components, which can then be applied to specific activities at specific locations. The BMDS PEIS will prevent duplicative analysis and assist in the analysis of ongoing actions where future decisions and conditions are not clearly known.

WHAT WILL BE ANALYZED IN THE BMDS PEIS?

The BMDS PEIS will evaluate impacts to the human and natural environment resulting from development, testing, deployment and planning for decommissioning activities. The PEIS will evaluate the application of existing infrastructure and integrated capabilities, as well as emerging and new technologies. The PEIS will analyze the range of components, elements and programs that make up the BMDS. The analysis of impacts in the PEIS may include consideration of

- Air quality
- Airspace
- Biological resources
- Cultural and historic resources
- Environmental justice
- Geology and soils
- Hazardous waste and materials
- Health and safety
- Land use
- Noise
- Socioeconomic resources
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Visual resources
- Water resources

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

There will be several opportunities for public participation throughout the preparation of the BMDS PEIS. During scoping and the public review period, the MDA will conduct meetings and hearings, respectively, to solicit comments from the public. The MDA invites the public to submit comments and questions throughout the entire BMDS PEIS development process, as well as during scoping and the public review period.

The Notice of Intent (NOI) announces MDA's intention to prepare a PEIS for the BMDS. The publication of the NOI initiates and describes scoping and invites the public, Federal agencies, Native American tribes, state and local governments and other interested parties to assist in determining the scope and significant issues to be evaluated in the PEIS. The purpose of scoping is to identify topics of particular interest to the public and various groups that should be addressed in the BMDS PEIS. The MDA encourages Federal, state, and local review agencies and members of the public to participate. Stakeholders and members of the public can participate via various forums, including public meetings, a public access web site, and direct mail. Through these means, the MDA wants to identify issues and concerns early in the process to ensure they are addressed in the PEIS.

MDA will prepare a Draft PEIS including issues identified during scoping. The MDA will publish a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* inviting members of the public and interested parties to provide comments on

the Draft PEIS. MDA will consider all comments in the preparation of the Final PEIS. MDA will revise the Draft PEIS as needed based on the comments received during the public review period. Publication of a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* will announce the release of the Final PEIS.

The Record of Decision (ROD) notifies the public of the decision made on the proposed action and the reasons for that decision. The decision takes into account the environmental analysis in the Final PEIS along with other factors such as technical feasibility, agency statutory mission, and national objectives. The ROD will also include any agreements for mitigation and monitoring efforts agreed to during the PEIS.

WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE?

NOI	April 11, 2003
Scoping	April 11 - June 12, 2003
Release Draft PEIS	January 2004
Public Hearings/Comment Response	January – March 2004
Release Final PEIS	June 2004
ROD	August 2004

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